

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4029

To increase the number of well-educated nurses, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2006

Mrs. CLINTON introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To increase the number of well-educated nurses, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Nursing Education
5 and Quality of Health Care Act of 2006”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The current nursing workforce is the largest
9 group of healthcare providers in the United States.

10 (2) There will be a need for 1,200,000 new and
11 replacement nurses by 2014.

1 (3) Over 37,000 qualified applicants were
 2 turned away from entry-level nursing programs lead-
 3 ing to a baccalaureate degree in 2005. This number
 4 increases to 147,000 when all schools of nursing are
 5 taken into account.

6 (4) Insufficient numbers of faculty is the pri-
 7 mary reason given by schools of nursing for not ac-
 8 cepting qualified applicants.

9 (5) The average age of doctorally-prepared
 10 nurse faculty is almost 56 years old.

11 (6) Nurses are the healthcare providers most
 12 likely to intercept medication errors before the errors
 13 reach patients and result in adverse events.

14 (7) Employing a greater proportion of more
 15 highly educated nurses may reduce the rates of pa-
 16 tient mortality.

17 **SEC. 3. RURAL NURSES TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM.**

18 Part D of title VIII of the Public Health Service Act
 19 (42 U.S.C. 296p) is amended by adding at the end the
 20 following:

21 **“SEC. 832. RURAL NURSES TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM.**

22 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
 23 grants to, or enter into contracts with, eligible entities for
 24 the purpose of educating nurses to serve in rural areas.

1 “(b) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
2 a grant under this section shall use grant funds to develop
3 distance learning education by—

4 “(1) providing technology infrastructure to en-
5 hance or increase—

6 “(A) broadband connectivity; and

7 “(B) education rooms wired for the Inter-
8 net;

9 “(2) providing technology infrastructure for a
10 video conferencing network;

11 “(3) recruiting, training, and supporting com-
12 munity-based faculty for classroom and clinical
13 training; or

14 “(4) recruiting and supporting community-
15 based sites for clinical training.

16 “(c) ANALYSES.—Not later than 1 year after the Sec-
17 retary awards grants under subsection (a), and annually
18 thereafter, the Secretary, working with the Administrator
19 of the Health Resources and Services Administration and
20 appropriate nursing agencies, shall collect and perform
21 analyses on the number of nurses in the United States
22 to track rural nursing trends.

23 “(d) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
24 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall generate an
25 annual report about the status of the nursing workforce

1 in the United States and shall disseminate the report as
 2 the Secretary determines appropriate.

3 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
 4 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
 5 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
 6 2007 through 2011.”.

7 **SEC. 4. NURSE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT.**

8 (a) NURSE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.—
 9 Part D of title VIII of the Public Health Service Act (42
 10 U.S.C. 296p et seq.) is amended by inserting after section
 11 832 (as added by section 3) the following:

12 **“SEC. 833. NURSE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.**

13 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
 14 the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services
 15 Administration, shall award grants to eligible entities for
 16 the establishment and operation of demonstration projects
 17 that will expand the numbers of nurse faculty within
 18 schools of nursing, including—

19 “(1) developing recruitment programs for
 20 nurses with academic credentials for faculty status
 21 who are not teaching at the time;

22 “(2) offering scholarships that facilitate the re-
 23 turn of registered nurses to a school of nursing on
 24 a part-time basis for graduate education that leads
 25 to a career in nursing education;

1 “(3) providing additional education to enable
2 nurses with graduate degrees to serve as faculty by
3 obtaining teaching certificates;

4 “(4) developing accelerated doctoral programs
5 that will facilitate entry in a nursing faculty posi-
6 tion;

7 “(5) developing online continuing education
8 courses and practice teaching opportunities for nurse
9 faculty; and

10 “(6) developing research internships and fellow-
11 ships for nursing students at academic medical cen-
12 ters to foster interest in academic research.

13 “(b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
14 of enactment of the Nursing Education and Quality of
15 Health Care Act of 2006, the Comptroller General of the
16 United States shall prepare and submit a report to Con-
17 gress that—

18 “(1) addresses the causes of the nurse faculty
19 shortage; and

20 “(2) makes recommendations to increase the
21 numbers and the retention of nurse faculty mem-
22 bers.

23 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
24 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section

1 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
 2 2007 through 2011.”.

3 (b) DOCTORAL PROGRAMS.—Section 811(f)(2) of the
 4 Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 296j(f)(2)) is
 5 amended by striking the period at the end and inserting
 6 “, except that in the case of a nurse faculty shortage, the
 7 Secretary may, in the Secretary’s discretion, obligate more
 8 than 10 percent of such traineeships for individuals in doc-
 9 toral degree programs.”.

10 **SEC. 5. DEVELOPING THE RURAL NURSING WORKFORCE.**

11 Part C of title VIII of the Public Health Service Act
 12 (42 U.S.C. 296m) is amended by adding at the end the
 13 following:

14 **“SEC. 822. DEVELOPING THE RURAL NURSING WORK-**
 15 **FORCE.**

16 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
 17 grants to, and enter into contracts with, eligible entities
 18 to increase the nursing opportunities for individuals who
 19 reside in rural communities. The activities funded under
 20 this section shall include—

21 “(1) increasing and expanding pipeline pro-
 22 grams, including—

23 “(A) mathematics and science programs;

24 “(B) Nurse Medical Academy of Science
 25 and Health (MASH) Camp and other health ca-

1 reer pipeline programs for middle school and
 2 secondary school students tied to higher edu-
 3 cation curricula;

4 “(C) nurse mentor programs that provide
 5 experience for secondary school students in clin-
 6 ical settings to learn about the nursing profes-
 7 sion;

8 “(D) training for middle school and sec-
 9 ondary school guidance counselors; and

10 “(E) programs that attract nontraditional
 11 nursing students, including minorities and men;

12 “(2) supporting a web-based healthcare work-
 13 force development system that will be a database-
 14 driven website to connect employers, educators, rural
 15 communities, and students with the nursing pipeline
 16 and recruitment programs described in this section;
 17 and

18 “(3) increasing the program capacity of acceler-
 19 ated registered nurse programs that recruit individ-
 20 uals with baccalaureate degrees in other fields into
 21 baccalaureate or graduate degree nursing programs
 22 that serve rural communities, by—

23 “(A) increasing the number of faculty;

24 “(B) increasing clinical training sites; and

1 “(C) providing financial incentives, includ-
 2 ing loan forgiveness and tuition assistance for
 3 nurses who practice in rural areas.

4 “(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
 5 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
 6 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
 7 2007 through 2011.”.

8 **SEC. 6. NURSING AND THE QUALITY OF HEALTHCARE.**

9 Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act (42
 10 U.S.C. 296 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the
 11 following:

12 **“PART J—NURSING AND IMPROVING**
 13 **HEALTHCARE**

14 **“SEC. 861. LINKING NURSING EDUCATION AND QUALITY**
 15 **OUTCOMES PROGRAM.**

16 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in collaboration
 17 with the Administrator of the Health Resources and Serv-
 18 ices Administration and the Director of the Agency for
 19 Healthcare Research and Quality, shall award grants to
 20 entities that meet the requirements of subsection (b) to
 21 enable the entities to carry out demonstration projects
 22 that advance the education, delivery, or measurement of
 23 quality and patient safety in nursing practice.

1 “(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a dem-
2 onstration project grant under this section, an entity
3 shall—

4 “(1) be a school of nursing, a nursing center,
5 an academic health center, a State or local govern-
6 ment, or any other public or private nonprofit entity
7 determined appropriate by the Secretary;

8 “(2) submit to the Secretary an application in
9 accordance with section 802;

10 “(3) form a partnership with 1 or more eligible
11 entities; and

12 “(4) submit a plan to the Secretary that
13 assures grant funds received under this section will
14 be used to support the implementation and evalua-
15 tion of healthcare quality improvement activities that
16 include—

17 “(A) with respect to healthcare systems,
18 activities relating to improving patient safety,
19 timeliness of care, effectiveness of care, equity
20 and efficiency of care, and patient-centeredness;
21 or

22 “(B) with respect to patients, activities, in-
23 cluding activities relating to staying healthy,
24 getting well, living with illness or disability, and
25 coping with end of life issues.

1 “(c) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under sub-
 2 section (a), the Secretary shall give priority to entities that
 3 will carry out 1 or more of the following:

4 “(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—Implementing initia-
 5 tives in professional nursing education to enhance
 6 patient safety efforts through evidence-based prac-
 7 tice and quality improvement strategies by—

8 “(A) developing partnerships between ac-
 9 credited schools of nursing and health care fa-
 10 cilities, as defined in section 801, to educate
 11 registered nurses in clinical leadership, inter-
 12 disciplinary team management, systems admin-
 13 istration, outcomes and risk management, and
 14 education, for implementation in multiple
 15 healthcare settings; and

16 “(B) providing scholarships for registered
 17 professional nurses to pursue advanced nursing
 18 education in accordance with subsection (a).

19 “(2) EDUCATION.—Integrating quality and
 20 safety competencies into nursing education programs
 21 by—

22 “(A) disseminating patient safety edu-
 23 cation content to a nurse faculty administrator
 24 to integrate quality competencies into each
 25 school of nursing that are consistent with tech-

1 nical standards that are developed or adopted
 2 by voluntary consensus standards bodies under
 3 section 12(d) of the National Technology
 4 Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (15
 5 U.S.C. 272 note); and

6 “(B) developing ongoing web-based mod-
 7 ules for continued nurse faculty education to
 8 bring research evidence into practice not later
 9 than 2 years after receiving a grant under this
 10 section; and

11 “(3) provide continuing education for practicing
 12 nurses, including—

13 “(A) developing web-based modules related
 14 to patient safety, including topics of evidenced-
 15 based practice, professional communication, pa-
 16 tient or family-centered care, systems thinking,
 17 informatics, collaborative practice, medication,
 18 and practice error; and

19 “(B) developing systems for the dissemina-
 20 tion of continuing education through facility-
 21 based staff development and orientation.

22 “(d) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall award
 23 grants to entities described in subsection (b) to collect
 24 data and study the potential benefits of basic and ad-
 25 vanced nursing education levels or certification status in

1 the efforts to promote quality improvement strategies and
2 enhance patient outcomes and cost saving measures, by—

3 “(1) compiling and analyzing quality indicator
4 data from existing databases and other sources to
5 evaluate relationships between basic and advanced
6 nursing education levels or certification status on
7 nursing sensitive indicators and quality outcomes;

8 “(2) working in consultation with State depart-
9 ments of health or other nonprofit patient safety or-
10 ganizations; or

11 “(3) demonstrating the cost savings and sus-
12 tainability of the demonstration projects.

13 “(e) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
14 of enactment of the Nursing Education and Quality of
15 Health Care Act of 2006, the Secretary shall submit a
16 report to Congress on the results of the program under
17 this section.

18 “(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
19 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
20 such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years
21 2007 through 2011.”.

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